



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Growth Management Planning Council
King County Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget
401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104

SUBJECT: Comments on the Draft CPP Affordable Housing Policies

Dear Members of the King County Growth Management Planning Council,

On behalf of the SeaTac City Council, I would like to thank the GMPC for the work that you and your staff have done over the last year. The current draft of the affordable housing section of the Countywide Planning Policies goes a long way toward addressing the concerns that the City of SeaTac and other cities raised last year about the inequitable distribution of affordable housing throughout the county. The city is particularly pleased that existing affordable housing will be accounted for in the inventory and assessment, with the emphasis on the need for affordable housing countywide and with the removal of targets for individual cities in the current draft.

SeaTac would also like to offer two amendments to the current draft for your consideration. These amendments were suggested by our Planning Commission and endorsed by the City Council and are shown as underlined sections on the attached document. Most of SeaTac's affordable housing is a reflection of market conditions, so these suggested amendments reflect the city's concern about additional subsidized housing.

Thank you for considering the City of SeaTac's comments.

Sincerely,

Gary Schenk,
Acting Director, Department of Community and Economic Development

cc: SeaTac City Councilmembers
Todd Cutts, SeaTac City Manager
SeaTac Planning Commission
Karen Wolf, Senior Policy Analyst, King County

Enclosure

Mayor
Tony Anderson

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The Hospitality City

HOUSING

The Countywide Planning Policies provide a framework for all jurisdictions to plan for and promote a range of affordable, accessible, and healthy housing choices for current and future residents. Within King County, there is an unmet need for housing that is affordable for households earning less than 80 percent of area median income (AMI). Households within this category include low-wage workers in services and other industries; persons on fixed incomes including many disabled and elderly residents; and homeless individuals and families. A high proportion of these households spend a greater percentage of their income on housing than is typically considered appropriate. This is especially true for low and very low income households earning less than 50 percent (low) and less than 30 percent (very-low) of area median income. The county and all cities share in the responsibility to increase the supply of housing that is affordable to these households.

While neither the county nor the cities can guarantee that a given number of units at a given price level will exist, be preserved, or be produced during the planning period, establishing the countywide need clarifies the scope of the effort for each jurisdiction. The type of policies and strategies that are appropriate for a jurisdiction to consider will vary and will be based on its analysis of housing. Some jurisdictions may need to address housing needs at multiple income levels because their overall supply of affordable housing is significantly less than their proportional share of the countywide need. Other jurisdictions that currently have housing stock that is generally affordable will focus efforts on preservation or on the needs of a specific demographic segment of the population.

The provision of housing affordable to very low income households, those earning less than 30% of AMI, is the most challenging problem and one faced by all communities in the county. Housing for these very low income households cannot be met solely through the private market. Meeting this need will require interjurisdictional cooperation and support from public agencies, including the cities and the county.

Overarching Goal: *The housing needs of all economic and demographic groups are met within all jurisdictions.*

H-1 Address the countywide need for housing for those with lower incomes and special needs. The countywide need for housing by percentage of Area Median Income (AMI) is:

50-80% of AMI (moderate)	16% of total housing supply
30-50% of AMI (low)	12% of total housing supply
30% and below AMI (very-low)	12% of total housing supply

H-2 Address the need for households at less than 30% AMI (very low income), recognizing that this is where the greatest need exists, and addressing this need will require policies and collaborative actions by jurisdictions working individually and collectively.

Housing Inventory and Needs Analysis

The Growth Management Act requires an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs as part of each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan housing element. Assessing local housing needs provides jurisdictions with information about the local housing supply, the cost of housing, and the demographic and income levels of the community's households. This information on current and future housing conditions provides the basis for the development of effective housing policies and programs. While some cities may find that they meet current need for housing or for some populations groups, the inventory and needs analysis will help identify those income levels and demographic segments of the population where there is the greatest need. Further guidance on conducting a housing inventory and analysis is provided in Appendix 4.

H-3 Conduct an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs of all economic and demographic segments of the population in each jurisdiction. The analysis and inventory shall include:

- a. Characteristics of existing housing and population;
- b. Projected growth and demographic change in the community;
- c. The needs of very-low, low, and moderate-income households; and
- d. Special needs populations.

Strategies to Meet Housing Needs

VISION 2040 encourages local jurisdictions to adopt best housing practices and innovative techniques to advance the provision of affordable, healthy, sustainable, and safe housing for all residents. Meeting the county's affordable housing needs will require actions by a wide range of private for-profit, non-profit and government entities, including substantial resources from federal, state, and local levels. No single tool is likely to be sufficient to meet the full range of needs in a given jurisdiction. The county and cities are encouraged to employ a range of housing tools to ensure the countywide need is addressed and are responsive to local conditions. More detailed guidance on the range of strategies for promoting housing supply and affordability is contained in Appendix 4.

H-4 Provide zoning capacity within each jurisdiction in the Urban Growth Area for a range of housing types and densities, sufficient to accommodate each jurisdiction's overall housing targets and, where applicable, housing growth targets in designated Urban Centers, .

H-5 Adopt policies and strategies, at the local and countywide levels, that promote housing supply, affordability, and diversity, including those that address a significant share of the

countywide need for very-low, low, and moderate income households. These strategies should address the following areas:

- a. Overall supply and diversity of housing, including both rental and ownership;
- b. Housing suitable for a range of household types and sizes;
- c. Affordability to very-low, low-, and moderate-income households;
- d. Housing suitable and affordable for households with special needs;
- e. Universal design and sustainable development of housing; and
- f. Housing supply, including affordable housing and special needs housing, within Urban Centers and in other areas planned for concentrations of mixed land uses.

H-6 Preserve existing affordable units where appropriate, including preservation of affordable housing, and the acquisition and rehabilitation of housing for long-term affordability.

H-7 Identify barriers to housing affordability and implement strategies to overcome them.

H-8 Tailor housing policies and strategies to local needs, conditions and opportunities, recognizing the unique strengths and challenges of different cities and sub-regions.

H-9 Plan for housing that is accessible to major employment centers and affordable to the workforce in them so people of all incomes can live near or within reasonable commuting distance of their places of work. Encourage housing production at a level that improves the balance of housing to employment throughout the county.

H-10 Promote housing development, preservation, and affordability in coordination with transit, bicycle, and pedestrian plans and investments and in proximity to transit hubs and corridors, such as through transit oriented development and planning for mixed uses in transit station areas.

H-11 Maintain the condition and quality of existing housing stock.

H-12 Plan for residential neighborhoods that protect and promote the health and well-being of residents by supporting active living and healthy eating and reducing the risk of injury and exposure to environmental toxins.

H-13 Promote fair housing and plan for communities that include residents with a range of abilities, ages, races, incomes, and other diverse characteristics of the population of the county.

H-14 Encourage economically sustainable projects that do not shift portions of the building and operating costs and the cost of government services to others.

Regional Cooperation

Housing affordability is important to regional economic vitality and sustainability. Housing markets do not respect jurisdictional boundaries. For these reasons, multijurisdictional efforts for planning and adopting strategies to meet regional housing needs are an additional tool for identifying and meeting affordable housing needs. Collaborative efforts, supported by the work of Puget Sound Regional Council and other agencies, contribute to producing and preserving affordable housing and coordinating equitable, sustainable development in the county and region. Where individual cities lack sufficient resources, collective efforts to fund or provide technical assistance for affordable housing development and preservation, and for the creation of strategies and programs, can help to meet the housing needs identified in comprehensive plans. Cities with similar housing characteristics tend to be clustered geographically. Therefore, there are opportunities for efficiencies and greater impact through interjurisdictional cooperation. Such efforts are encouraged and can be a way to achieve countywide affordable housing needs.

H-14-15 Work cooperatively among jurisdictions to provide mutual support in meeting countywide housing growth targets and affordable housing needs.

H-15-16 Collaborate in developing sub-regional and countywide housing resources and programs, including funding, to provide affordable housing for very-low, low-, and moderate-income households.

H-16-17 Work cooperatively with the Puget Sound Regional Council and other agencies to identify ways to expand technical assistance to local jurisdictions in developing, implementing and monitoring the success of strategies that promote affordable housing that meets changing demographic needs. Collaborate in developing and implementing a housing strategy for the four-county central Puget Sound region.

Measuring Results

Maintaining timely and relevant data on housing markets and residential development allows the county and cities to evaluate the effectiveness of their housing strategies and to make appropriate changes to those strategies when and where needed. In assessing efforts to meet affordable housing targets, jurisdictions need to consider public actions taken to encourage development and preservation of very low-, low- and moderate-income housing, such as local funding, development code changes, and creation of new programs, as well as market and other factors that are beyond local government control. Further detail on monitoring procedures is contained in Appendix 4.

H-17-18 Monitor housing supply and affordability, including progress toward meeting the identified needs for affordable housing. Monitoring should encompass:

- a. Number and type of new housing units;

- b. Number of units lost to demolition, redevelopment, or conversion to non-residential use;
- c. Number of new units that are affordable to very-low, low-, and moderate-income households;
- d. Number of affordable units newly preserved and units acquired and rehabilitated with a regulatory agreement for long-term affordability for very-low, low-, and moderate-income households;
- e. Housing market trends including affordability of overall housing stock;
- f. Changes in zoned capacity for housing;
- g. The number and nature of fair housing complaints;
- h. Housing development and market trends in Urban Centers.
- i. Provide transparency of comprehensive housing related subsidies annually.

H-18 Periodically review and amend the countywide and local housing policies and strategies, especially where monitoring indicates that adopted strategies are not resulting in adequate affordable housing to meet the countywide need.

